

Women in Agriculture

Abstract

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Foodborne illnesses continue to burden both developed and developing nations around the world with short- and long-term health problems and economic costs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has implemented a science-based inspection system to ensure the safety of the meat, poultry and egg products supply not only in the United States, but also around the world to help reduce foodborne illness.

Even with important indicators of success from USDA's food safety system, the Department continues to improve its meat and poultry inspection methods by integrating more science into its policy making and encouraging public participation. In addition, USDA pursues an aggressive public education program to provide food preparers, including consumers, with the knowledge that foodborne illnesses are preventable by taking simple and easy steps to reduce bacteria. Many of USDA's educational programs are targeted to segments of the population at increased risk of foodborne illness.

USDA is committed to working with international organizations to ensure a safe food supply worldwide. The Department is actively engaged in the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which sets international standards and helps individual countries strengthen their own food safety systems.

While the United States is fortunate to have a food supply that is often characterized as abundant, safe, nutritious and economical, USDA realizes that its food safety system is not perfect. USDA values input and open dialogue with all those involved in food safety and stresses that everyone, regardless of role or occupation, has a responsibility for improving food safety worldwide.